GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4157
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2010
STATE MINISTERS CONFERENCE
Saroj Smt. Sushila;Upadhyay Seema

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the details of conference of State Ministers with the Ministry held during the last three years and the outcome thereof;

(b) whether any consensus was evolved in the said conference; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith implementation of its recommendations, if any ?

Answer

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ(Dr. C.P. JOSHI)

(a): The following conferences were held with the State Ministers during this period:-

(i) A meeting of the Ministers of Panchayati Raj was held on 25-04-2008 to discuss the Charter of demands presented to Hon'ble Prime Minister during the National Convention of Presidents of Zilla Parishads and Panchayat Semites on 22-24th April, 2008.

(ii) National Convention of Panchayati Raj was held on 02nd October, 2009 in which Minister of some States have also had taken part.

(iii) A meeting was held on 24-04-2010 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi with representatives of States, which was attended by Ministers of some states also. This related to presentation of State of Panchayati Raj Report 2009-10 and Roadmap to Panchayats for 2009-14.

(iv) A symposium jointly organized by Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Rural Development on 22-9-2010 at New Delhi to discuss and obtain feedback of States on Staffing arrangements etc. for Gram Panchayats under MNREGA

(b)&(c): After the meetings held on 25-04-2008 as referred to above, a copy of the finalized Charter which had been presented to Hon'ble Prime Minister on 24-04-2008, was sent to the concerned State Chief Secretaries / Administrators of UTs with request for circulating the same to their Panchayats and Gram Sabhas. The Charter comprised of issues like Functional Empowerment of Panchayats, Financial Empowerment of Panchayats, Decentralized Planning and Implementation, Constitution of DPCs and Panchayati Raj in areas covered by Fifth Schedule.

A National Convention of Panchayati Raj was held on 2nd October, 2009 in which Minister of some States also had taken part. This Convention was held to commemorate the Golden jubilee of Panchayati Raj.

In the meeting held on 24-4-2010 various issues/suggestions emerged eg. Centrality of PRIs in Eleventh Plan , devolution of funds, functions & functionaries , the need of Capacity Building, manpower and infrastructure for Panchayats, other local issues raised by the representative etc. Copy of the minutes of the proceeding that took place on that day has been sent to all concerned for information and necessary action. In the Symposium held on 22-09-2010 following decision / suggestions emerged for further necessary action by all concerned:-

(i) The whole staffing pattern of the GPs should be seen in a new governance paradigm in which Panchayat also is a constitutional unit of governance like the Union & States. This has implications which need to be addressed in short, medium and long term. For instance, apart from being the local self-government, the Panchayats would do planning, implementation etc. of Central/State schemes and in such a case, full complement of adequately skilled staff including Panchayat Development Officer would be an imperative.

(ii) If it is not possible to provide full complement of staff to the GPs, then the states may work out an appropriate complement of staff, keeping in view the actual need and administrative cost ceiling under MGNREGA, BRGF and other sources of funding.

(iii) States need to look at the availability of Civil Engineers for appointment at GPs.